

NEW YORK TIMES

JUN 10 1966

Arab Group Says It Will Send Troops to Aid Vietcong Forces

By HEDRICK SMITH

Special to The New York Times

CAIRO, June 9 — The Palestine Liberation Army, set up by Arab heads of state to oppose Israel, will send members to Vietnam to "fight alongside the Vietcong in their struggle against American imperialism," its spokesman said today.

The plans were announced to the official Egyptian news agency by Ahmed Shukairy, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization, who met Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin of the Soviet Union last month during the Premier's visit to the United Arab Republic.

Mr. Shukairy did not say how many members of the Liberation Army would go to Vietnam or when they would arrive. But he asserted that experience there would enable them to "study under actual conditions the methods of guerrilla warfare, which will be useful in the inevitable war to liberate Palestine."

Peking Aids Army

Although the Liberation Army says it is independent, Western diplomats considered it to be under the control of the United Arab Republic through the United Arab Command. It is considered more of a guerrilla or paramilitary force than an organized army, according to Western military analysts.

The army has received both propaganda and material support from Communist China, which included such light weapons as rifles, pistols, grenades and bazookas.

Last month, Mr. Shukairy said at a meeting of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Gaza that some Palestinian troops were being trained in Communist China. Western observers presumed that group was most likely to be sent to Vietnam.

Mr. Shukairy declined tonight to say whether Palestinians would actually fight against Americans.

Problem Could Be Raised

Asked if his organization had consulted Arab League members that had contributed to the financing of the Palestinian Army, he replied, "We are an independent organization and do not take orders from anyone."

Nonetheless, even a token presence of the Palestine Liberation Army in Vietnam opposing the United States and South Vietnamese forces could raise serious problems for Arab states, compromising their claims to nonalignment.

In practical military terms, their presence, according to Western military experts, is unlikely to have any significant effect. Western analysts rate the military capabilities of the Army as among the lowest of all Arab-troops.

Mr. Shukairy's announcement was apparently intended as a counteraction to the disclosure that Moshe Dayan, former Chief of Staff of the Israeli Army, would visit South Vietnam as a correspondent to cover the American and South Vietnamese side of the war.